

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 2, 8, 9 and 13-15, leaves claims 3, 4 and 10 unchanged and cancels claims 1, 5-7, 11, 12 and 16. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 2-4, 8-10 and 13-15.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's indication in paragraph 5 of the Office Action that claims 2-4, 8-10 and 13-15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Amendments were made to claims 2-4, 8-10 and 13-15 to place them in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claims 2-4, 8-10 and 13-15 are allowable as indicated by the Examiner.

Claims 1, 5-7, 11, 12 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Takayama (U.S. Patent No. 6,683,643). As indicated above, claims 1, 5-7, 11, 12 and 16 were canceled. Therefore, this rejection is rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

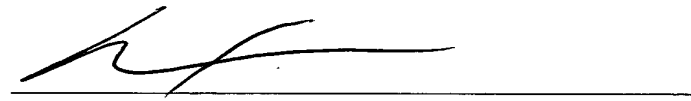
It should be noted that the cancellation of claims 1, 5-7, 11, 12 and 16 was not intended nor should it be considered as an agreement on Applicants part that the features recited in claims 1, 5-7, 11, 12 and 16 are taught or suggested by Takayama whether taken individually or in combination with any of the other references of record. The cancellation of claims 1, 5-7, 11, 12 and 16 was simply intended to expedite prosecution of the present application.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance based on claims 2-4, 8-10 and 13-15. Accordingly, early allowance of the present application based on claims 2-4, 8-10 and 13-15 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (500.40399X00).

Respectfully submitted,

MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Brundidge', is written over a horizontal line.

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